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CITIZENSHIP-EDUCATION IN CANADA

Helen McKenzie
Political and Social Affairs Division

May 1993



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CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN CANADA

INTRODUCTION

Education for good citizenship is important not only for its effects on politics and government, but also in relation to community and voluntary activities, and social and international harmony. While always a general goal of educators in Canada, this aspect of education did not receive a great deal of formal attention in the past. Reliance was placed on the home and church, as well as the school, to instil in young people the principles of loyalty and adherence to duty that were considered the main components of good citizenship. In today's rapidly changing world, however, the adequacy of this traditional approach to citizenship preparation is being questioned and there is evidence of renewed interest in the topic both in Canada and abroad.

This paper provides information on citizenship education in this country, touching upon its various aspects and participants in its development and provision, including governments and the voluntary sector. It is an introduction to a complex subject, emphasizing its evolution in recent years. A brief discussion is included of certain relevant developments in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Historically, the idea of citizenship was based on the concept of membership in a homogeneous cultural group, and focused on duties pertaining to the well-being of that group. In the modern world, however, immigration patterns and improved international transportation and communications have brought about closer relationships among different cultural groups within the global community. With growing heterogeneity of populations and interdependence among nations, new notions of citizenship are developing and citizenship education has become an increasingly complex issue.

Concepts of citizenship education in Canada have evolved in recent years in step with global trends. Ideas on the subject, however, were never completely lacking in this country. From the time of Egerton Ryerson in the mid-nineteenth century, there was some limited recognition that government in a democracy had a responsibility for the education of the people who were the source and, in some cases, administrators of the nation's laws, and who therefore ought to be capable of enlightened decision-making. In 1848 he observed that "public education and public liberty stand or fall together."⁽¹⁾ Some of the school superintendents in Canada West at that time viewed state education as a means of encouraging a sense of national identity.

Following Confederation, education developed as a provincial responsibility and aspects of citizenship education were often related to various concepts of allegiance (to the Crown, to Canada, and to individual provinces and localities). With Canada's growth to full nationhood, however, the prevailing concerns relating to civic education shifted from notions of a generally passive loyalty to the idea of belonging to and participating in the operation of an increasingly democratic state.

By the 1950s, citizenship had become a concept with a history in Canada. It could no longer be discussed as merely a legal status, but rather, it was a composite of four elements: the civil element, concerned with the rights necessary for basic individual freedoms; the political element, incorporating the right to participate in political activity; social rights, relating to standards of economic welfare and security, and finally, the moral aspect, symbolized by the term "good citizen."⁽²⁾

Citizenship was, therefore, recognized as a legal status conferring civil, political and social rights, balanced by obligations. Increasingly, educators acknowledged an understanding by the citizenry of these rights and obligations to be essential for the maintenance of a democratic system of government.

(1) Egerton Ryerson, "The Importance of Education to a Manufacturing and Free People," *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*, Vol.1, No. 10, October 1848, p. 296.

(2) Aileen D. Ross, "Citizenship Today," in J.R. Kidd, ed., *Learning and Society*, Canadian Association for Adult Education, Mutual Press Limited, 1963, p. 389.

Different models of citizenship education have been discussed and various approaches developed in Canada and elsewhere, stressing to a greater or less extent the perceived importance of components such as the development of the capacity for critical participation in society and knowledge of basic national history and geography, or "cultural literacy." Together, these various aspects of education encourage the growth of the individual potential for good citizenship. This entails a learning process that begins in childhood but does not end there. While the training of children and youth is an essential part of it, adult education, particularly in a land of immigrants, is also fundamentally important in facilitating the full participation of all individuals as citizens in our society. This purpose of adult education has long been recognized in Canada.

In recent years, both in Canada and abroad, the increased attention given to citizenship education has revealed the wide variety of views that exist on this subject. In the United Kingdom, Andrew Phillips stated in 1991 that "Citizenship by its very nature will always be a variable and contested concept, subjected to much academic debate."⁽³⁾ Similarly in Canada, citizenship has been acknowledged to be an essentially contested concept.⁽⁴⁾ Citizenship education has come to be interpreted differently among diverse groups within society, and to be presented from various perspectives in school curricula across Canada.

Some efforts are being made in academic circles in this country to develop a new consensus on the subject of citizenship, and an improved approach to citizenship education. The Canadian Association for the Social Studies (CASS) has formed a Committee for Effective Canadian Citizenship Education, to work with various groups to develop a wider concept of this type of education and to help coordinate federal and provincial educational initiatives in this respect.

In addition, during research carried out in the Delphi study on citizenship at the Faculty of Education of the University of New Brunswick, a sample of existing notions about the concept was surveyed in an effort to reconcile the wide range of views and to provide some

(3) "Citizenship and Youth," *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. 4, October 1991, p. 541.

(4) Alan Sears, Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, *Proceedings*, 19 May 1992, 8:8.

direction to those involved in citizenship education. Another recent initiative has been the compilation by Professor Alan Sears, at the University of British Columbia, of a review of research on the subject in Canada. Although authorities in the field have yet to reach a final consensus on its essentials, citizenship education clearly entails a number of main aspects.

ASPECTS OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Various facets of learning have come to be associated in Canada with citizenship education; it may, therefore, be considered from different perspectives. These include the acquisition of knowledge of Canadian history, geography and social studies, the development of participatory skills such as literacy and desirable social attitudes, a respect for and commitment to the preservation of the natural environment, and an understanding of one's place in the world and the inter-relationship of nations.

A. Canadian History, Geography and Social Studies; Canadian Studies

Traditionally, elements of citizenship education were contained in school history courses, to some extent in geography, and later in social studies. The objectives of these courses were considered in Ontario by the 1961 Social Sciences Study Committee. It found that schools tended to treat history as "a body of knowledge that must be acquired by anybody who is to become a good citizen" but noted that, in view of the complexity of world problems, simply learning facts was not enough. The Committee stated, "if we are thinking of producing responsible democratic citizens," students should be able to read currently available information and discuss it "sceptically, and with some notion of the value of evidence, some notion of relevance and irrelevance, and some discrimination between facts and prejudices ... without some ability of this sort, they cannot pull their weight in the democratic process."⁽⁵⁾

The National History Project revealed in 1967 that Canadian students in general were not achieving this level of understanding from history courses, and that widely different

(5) Report of the Social Sciences Study Committee, in Northrop Frye, ed., *Design for Learning*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1962, p. 88-89.

versions of Canadian history were being taught in Quebec and in the English-speaking provinces, none of which had much connection with the world in which the students lived.⁽⁶⁾

Although there have been course changes since that time, the criticisms still appear to have some validity. A common Canadian history textbook has not yet been accepted by all provinces and the emphasis on this subject appears to have declined. It has generally been subsumed under the rubric of social studies. Some of these courses contain elements of civics education and others do not. One authority has stated that, in general, the teaching of social studies in Canada has tended to be "pretty haphazard and probably not very well done."⁽⁷⁾

Those endeavouring to promote growth and achieve excellence in this area are to some extent, however, swimming against the tide. During a time of rapid scientific progress and restricted government spending capacity, there has been a tendency to concentrate on the sciences and technical education as being vital for the promotion of national economic well-being. Rapid developments in technology, for example, have created the need for access to education in computer sciences. During the past several years, provincial governments have made substantial expenditures to ensure that computer education programs are available and to keep up or catch up with new trends and technological developments in that field.

In the modern world, there are good reasons to emphasize the importance of science, engineering and business education. Some educators, however, including the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), have warned that the value of studies in the social sciences should not be underestimated. In a 1988 brief presented to a parliamentary committee, the CAUT discussed the importance of the social sciences and humanities, emphasizing their potential for interpreting the social and cultural impact of technological progress. In addition to acquiring scientific capabilities, the Association concluded, Canadians "must also know ourselves - our history, literature, philosophy - if we are to have the self-confidence to compete as an equal player in the world economy."⁽⁸⁾

In the United States, scholars have stressed the significance of the study of history in the development of individual judgment. The Bradley Commission in 1988 concluded that learning history helps students to develop a sense of "shared humanity," and "to question

(6) A.B. Hodgetts, *What Culture, What Heritage?: A Study of Civic Education in Canada*, OISE, Toronto, 1968, p. 24 and p. 32.

(7) John Grant, Standing Senate Committee, *Proceedings*, 17 March 1992, 2:49.

(8) House of Commons, Standing Committee on Secretary of State, *Proceedings*, February 1988, CAUT Brief, p. 7.

stereotypes of others, and of themselves; to discern the difference between fact and conjecture; to grasp the complexity of historical cause; to distrust the simple answer and the dismissive explanation; to respect particularity and avoid false analogy."⁽⁹⁾

Canadian studies in general have been a neglected field in this country. The Commission on Canadian Studies, headed by Professor Thomas Symons, examined the state of teaching about Canada in our schools and universities nearly two decades ago, and found cause for concern. The Commission's 1975 Report recommended that all students in the educational system be required to attain certain levels of understanding about Canadian political institutions and background before graduation from high school or university.⁽¹⁰⁾ In 1992, Professor Symons again warned that the teaching, in universities and colleges in this country, of Canadian subject matter, "the knowledge base ... necessary if citizenship is going to have any meaning," remains inadequate, and that it is "ghettoized" by being taught in isolation, rather than pervasively, throughout the curricula.⁽¹¹⁾

B. Literacy: An Essential Participatory Skill

While recognizing the importance of civic education, the study of history and the social sciences, the need to facilitate such study through the effective teaching of literacy skills must also be addressed. These skills cannot be taken for granted in Canada, where the 1987 Southam survey discovered that about 4.5 million adults were functionally illiterate. In this country, as throughout the world, illiteracy remains a major obstacle to the development of the individual capacity for good citizenship in the modern state.

Participatory democracy requires that citizens are able to take part in the nation's decision-making, and a basic requirement for effective participation is literacy. This fact was recognized by the International Symposium for Literacy, held in Persepolis in 1975. Literacy,

(9) Paul Gagnon, "Why Study History?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 1988, p. 43-66, at p. 44.

(10) T.H.B. Symons, *To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies*, Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, Ottawa, 1975, discussed in Jon H. Pammett and Jean-Luc Pepin, *Political Education in Canada*, The Institute for Research on Public Policy, Halifax, 1988, p. 126.

(11) Standing Senate Committee, *Proceedings*, 17 March 1992, 2: 60-61.

it has been said, empowers the individual "both in the psychological and the social sense, and ... sharpens consciousness, creates discontent with the unacceptable, and adds potential to individual capacity for participation"; in short, literacy makes modern democracy possible.⁽¹²⁾

C. Social Attitudes and Values Education

For the success of a modern participatory democracy, there are also other requirements of citizens. They must be "engaged in a shared search for the common good, and ... cooperate in trying to achieve it. It requires values, not just of cooperation, but of mutual respect and tolerance for fellow participants."⁽¹³⁾ These values are represented in democratic social attitudes.

The moral aspect of citizenship is implied in the concept of being a "good" citizen. "This evaluative adjective is not always mentioned, except in election time and at high school closings. But its unacknowledged presence is often present and turns the concept of citizenship into an ideal of justice and duty against which the achievements of people can be measured and towards which aspirations can be directed."⁽¹⁴⁾

There are expectations in society that its members will not only fulfil the formal political duties of citizenship, but will also appreciate and support the established values of the society to which they belong and work toward the common good. Educators have long struggled with the challenge of imparting these attitudes to the young, along with formal learning.

The Ontario Social Sciences Study Committee noted in 1961, for example, that directives for teaching social studies included the inculcation in the students of desirable social attitudes and principles of behaviour. Social studies were to promote the development among students of "consideration for others, willingness to accept responsibility and to work with others ..., attitudes of helpfulness and loyalty to friends, home, school and community" and, in

(12) H.S. Bhola, "Literacy for Survival and for More Than Mere Survival," International Bureau of Education, UNESCO, Geneva 1990, p. 7-8 and 13-14.

(13) Jon Pammett, in Pammett and Pepin (1988), p. 214.

(14) J.R. Kidd, ed., *Learning and Society*, Canadian Association for Adult Education, Mutual Press, 1963, p. 389.

general, of qualities that enable the individual "to be a good citizen." Co-operation in a democratic group, these directives recognized, "requires self-control, intelligent self-direction, and the ability to accept responsibility."⁽¹⁵⁾ Training to be loyal to school and community was viewed as preparation for a broader loyalty and patriotism toward one's country. The Committee observed that using the schools for "moral acculturation" appeared to be an established custom, and one that was probably inevitable.

Although the trend in recent decades has been to avoid specific moral training, some modern school curricula still include the promotion of moral values as a goal. In the western provinces, for example, the core values of citizenship education have been identified as "tolerance, cooperation, fair play, moderation, rationality and critical thought."⁽¹⁶⁾ In Alberta, a stated secondary school goal is the development of "desirable personal characteristics such as integrity, honesty, fairness, generosity, self-esteem, respect for others, responsibility for one's actions, a sense of justice, tolerance, open-mindedness, respect for the environment, sharing, stewardship, and cooperation."⁽¹⁷⁾

The Canadian School Boards Association in 1992 recognized that "personal and social skills that promote self-esteem, individual responsibility and respect for others should be taught. Graduates should be able to make moral and ethical decisions."⁽¹⁸⁾

D. Environmentalism and Global Citizenship

Moral and ethical decisions today frequently relate to environmental issues, often of international significance; respect for the environment, therefore, and the acceptance of responsibility toward it, have come to be considered as attributes of good citizenship, both

(15) Frye (1962), p. 90.

(16) Kenneth Osborne, "Political Education in the Schools of Western Canada, in Pammett and Pepin (1988), p. 77.

(17) Alberta Department of Education, *Secondary Education in Alberta*, Edmonton, 1985, p.17, quoted in Pammett and Pepin (1988), p. 77.

(18) Jennifer Lewington, "Trustees Propose Education Goals," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 10 April 1992, p. A6.

regarding one's own country and the world at large. The Government of Canada has affirmed, in relation to its Green Plan, that caring for the environment is one of the responsibilities of citizenship, and it has acknowledged the need for education that promotes sensitivity to environmental issues.

The environmentally responsible citizen must be not only scientifically informed but also capable of applying moral reasoning in consideration of an issue. It has been suggested, therefore, that more should be done in all fields of study to prepare individuals to think "scientifically, philosophically, morally, historically, and aesthetically."⁽¹⁹⁾

An awareness of environmental issues encourages a sense of responsibility not only to one's nation state but to the entire world. The development of concern about issues that extend beyond national borders fosters international cooperation and the ideal of world citizenship. An Australian parliamentary committee considered the international dimension of citizenship in 1989 and recommended that young people "be encouraged to progress beyond a purely insular view of the world and to become aware of the interdependence of all nations - in short, to see themselves as 'global citizens'."⁽²⁰⁾ This has long been the point of view of some Canadian educators.

In 1958, for example, Dr. Brock Chisholm advised the expansion of school curricula to include a more universal approach, in order to provide students with some understanding of various world religions and systems of social development. He reasoned that the existing barriers in people's minds to world co-operation and peace are "the inevitable result of the learning process to which almost all the world's children are subjected" and that it should be possible to develop a system of education which will not produce these barriers.⁽²¹⁾

(19) Bob Jickling, "Environmental Education and Environmental Advocacy: The Need for a Proper Distinction," *Canadian Issues* 13, 1991, p. 169-76, at p. 174.

(20) Australia, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Education for Active Citizenship in Australian Schools and Youth Organisations*, Report by the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, Australian Government Publishing Services, Canberra 1989, p. 60-61.

(21) Brock Chisholm, "Education for World Citizenship," reprinted in *Humanist in Canada*, Summer 1992, p. 13.

More recently, two Canadian writers have noted that Canada's citizenship education continues to emphasize local, provincial or national perspectives at a time when the world is becoming increasingly interdependent. Canada's complex relationship with the rest of the world, they urge, should be reflected in education that prepares Canadians to be world citizens, to participate effectively in political and economic processes and to understand and influence public policy "whether we are talking about energy, free trade, agriculture, or the environment, in Canada or abroad."⁽²²⁾

These aspects of citizenship education may be included throughout public school curricula and may also be incorporated in education programs for adults who leave school early, and for those who are newcomers to Canada.

PARTICIPATION OF GOVERNMENTS IN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Both federal and provincial governments in Canada play important roles as facilitators of programs with citizenship education content or impact. Although education is largely a matter of provincial jurisdiction, the federal government is involved in many ways, both directly and indirectly. This paper only touches briefly on some examples of federal and provincial activities relating to citizenship education.

A. Role of the Federal Government in Canada

The federal government is responsible for setting the eligibility criteria and controlling the process for granting Canadian citizenship. It has also accepted responsibility for promoting citizenship awareness among the population and working towards the elimination of barriers to full participation in society. Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, the Department of the Secretary of State, and Employment and Immigration Canada play the leading roles in fulfilling these responsibilities.

(22) Patricia Schuyler and George W. Schuyler, "Thoughts On Education for Global Citizenship," in Keith A. McLeod, ed., *Canada and Citizenship Education*, Canadian Education Association, Toronto, 1989, p. 160-163.



1. Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada

The Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship "helps new Canadians become part of Canadian society by promoting literacy, by working to eliminate discrimination and racism, by educating the public about their rights and responsibilities as Canadian citizens, by encouraging voluntary action and by advocating human rights."⁽²³⁾

In 1986, the Speech from the Throne declared Canada's commitment to cooperation with governments, the private sector and voluntary associations to ensure access to literacy skills for all Canadians. The National Literacy Secretariat was established that year in the Department of the Secretary of State to administer a literacy program and encourage cooperative efforts. Because literacy is essential for full participation in Canadian society, the Secretariat was subsequently placed within the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship. The National Literacy Program, started in 1988 with funding of \$110 million over five years, has supported various literacy initiatives including three major research studies on literacy in Canada. The federal government has supported various literacy projects and activities developed in cooperation with provincial and territorial governments, voluntary organizations, business and labour.

The Citizenship Registration and Promotion Branch of Multiculturalism and Citizenship produces booklets and other material to help people applying for citizenship learn something about the history, geography and institutions of this country, and about the rights and responsibilities of its citizens. Instructors' manuals have been prepared, for example, to assist teachers of an official second language to convey some knowledge of Canadian citizenship to newcomers.

The Department has also supported various undertakings and the development of formal educational materials to foster understanding of multiculturalism in Canada. Assisted projects include, for example, the production of a training manual, with strategies in race relations, for the Canadian School Boards Association, and the 1990-91 national survey of school board programs addressing multiculturalism, which noted successful models that might be copied in different parts of the country.

(23) Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, "Canadian Citizenship: What Does It Mean To You?" Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1992, p. 23.

2. The Department of the Secretary of State of Canada

The goals of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada include strengthening knowledge about Canada, fostering mutual understanding, and supporting the full participation of Canadians in their society. The Canada Student Loans program, a major undertaking of this Department, increases the opportunities for effective participation in society by making higher education more accessible to those with demonstrated financial need. Federal statutory expenditures for student loans increased from some \$229 million in 1984-85 to about \$456 million in 1991-92. (Funding is also provided for a separate program in Quebec.)

The federal government encourages students to learn both of Canada's official languages. Federal support for this purpose is provided through inter-governmental arrangements and through two national programs, the Summer Language Bursary Program and the Official Language Monitor Program. In 1990-91, the national contribution for official languages in post-secondary education amounted to nearly \$92 million.

Other programs supported by this Department include the Canadian Studies Program, which assists in the development of materials for learning about Canada. These include relevant books, videos, and computer-based and distance education materials. The Canadian Studies Directorate, through its "Matching Dollar" program, encourages private sector support for Canadian Studies projects. The Knowing Canada Better program assists private, voluntary initiatives for the promotion of knowledge about Canada and understanding among Canadians. An example is the exchange of municipal leaders undertaken with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

The Department has also, for many years, supported exchange programs for students and teachers, helping Canadians from different regions to understand one another better. Open House Canada, for example, has provided opportunities for many young people to learn about different parts of this country through reciprocal exchange visits.

3. Employment and Immigration Canada

The Department of Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC) provides integration and settlement services, including reception, counselling and language training, to

new immigrants. Federal settlement programs have been designed to facilitate their full participation in all aspects of Canadian life - social, economic, cultural and political.

The Department's 1991-95 Immigration Plan recognized the need to strengthen settlement services to help immigrants and refugees adapt to life in their new communities. The plan included the establishment of new language training programs, increasing the number and kinds of opportunities for training. It is expected that the proportion of new arrivals participating in these programs will increase from about 28% in 1992 to about 45% in 1995. Under the Federal Immigrant Integration Strategy and as part of the five-year plan, new funds of \$295 million were provided, in addition to annual expenditures of \$149 million (representing a 43% increase) for improved language training and settlement programs for immigrants.⁽²⁴⁾ (This does not include the funding for Quebec, which has a separate plan.)

For language training alone, about \$615 million is allocated for expenditure over the five-year plan, exclusive of Quebec. This represents an increase of about 60% over previous funding for language training for immigrants. The new training policy, announced in January 1992, offers flexible training options, including Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). This program, normally offered during an immigrant's first year in Canada, will place more emphasis on introducing newcomers to shared Canadian values, rights and responsibilities. LINC accounts for about 80% of EIC language training funds. Another program, Labour Market Language Training, is geared to meeting more specific labour market language requirements.

EIC has also recognized the importance of literacy for full participation in our society, and has promoted it in activities such as its Stay In School initiative.

The activities of other federal departments may also contribute to various aspects of citizenship education. Environmental responsibility, for example, is promoted by Environment Canada. Two new programs of this Department, with a combined budget of about \$61 million, have recently been introduced as part of the Environmental Citizenship Initiative. The Environmental Learning Program provides information, encourages responsible habits, and

(24) Information on integration and settlement funding and programs is taken from Employment and Immigration Canada, *Managing Immigration: A Framework for the 1990s*, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1992, p. 25-26.

supports the Canada-wide Sustainable Development Education Program in the schools. The Community Support Program assists voluntary and community projects. It has three components: the Youth Environmental Action Fund, the Volunteers Support Fund, and Community Planning.

In addition to these particular programs, the federal government supports post-secondary education through financial transfers to the provinces and territories and through government tax allowances or special features in the tax structure. In 1990-91, the federal government provided about \$5.6 billion in intergovernmental cash and tax transfers for post-secondary education, not including transfers for official languages education.

B. Provincial Participation in Citizenship Education

In Canada, education is a matter of provincial responsibility and the provincial authorities, therefore, have a major role to play in the formulation and provision of citizenship education.

1. Public School Curricula

Policies on citizenship education in Canadian schools are directed by the provincial ministries of education and there are, accordingly, some variations in approach. At least to some extent, however, the objective of preparation for citizenship has been addressed by all public school systems in Canada. This paper briefly mentions some examples of provincial programs and policies on citizenship education.

In western Canada, school systems have stressed as a primary goal the preparation of students to be good citizens.⁽²⁵⁾ A statement of the "guiding principles" of secondary education in Alberta, for example, includes "a commitment to meaningful participation in our democratic society," and "a commitment to educating young people to assume responsibility for themselves and for the future direction of society."⁽²⁶⁾

(25) Kenneth Osborne, in Pammett and Pepin (1988), p. 75.

(26) Alberta Department of Education, *Secondary Education in Alberta*, Edmonton, 1985, p. 7.

In Canadian school curricula, social studies is generally the home of citizenship education. A survey of provincial social studies curricula, published by the Council of Ministers of Education Canada in 1982, revealed that social studies programs in all provinces appeared to share the main goal of providing students "with the knowledge, skills, values and thought processes which will enable them to participate effectively and responsibly in the ever-changing environment of their community, their country and the world."⁽²⁷⁾ In the past, social studies in some provinces have been specifically linked to the concept of citizenship education. The 1985 curriculum guide in British Columbia, for example, stated that "the overall theme of social studies is one of responsible citizenship."⁽²⁸⁾

In practice, however, this goal of preparation for active citizenship is often not fully achieved in Canada, partly because in some provinces (Ontario for example) senior high school courses in the social sciences are optional, and many students either do not participate in them or do so only minimally. An Ontario study reported in 1988 that most students in that province had completed their formal political education by the end of Grade 10, having studied only one course at the intermediate level with specific content on Canada's government and legal system. This aspect of the compulsory history course was covered in some 15 to 18 hours, or only 15% of the allotted instruction time for the course.

This coverage of the subject at that level, the study found, did not ensure an understanding of Canada's political or constitutional history or system of government and, in fact, did not have that main goal; the emphasis was on social history. Further findings were that after Grade 10, when all history courses became optional, enrolment in them declined greatly; in Grades 11 and 12, for example, more than double the number of students enrolled in mathematics, also optional, than in history.⁽²⁹⁾ The authors of this study recommended that

(27) G. Redden, *Social Studies: A Survey of Provincial Curricula at the Elementary and Secondary Levels*, Council of Ministers of Education Canada, Toronto, 1982, p. 4.

(28) British Columbia Department of Education, *Social Studies Curriculum Guide, Grade Eight - Grade Eleven*, Victoria, 1985, p. 77.

(29) John Ricker and Alan Skeoch, in Pammett and Pepin (1988), p. 67-68.

students be required to demonstrate a basic understanding of the reasons for Canada's existence and of how it is governed, before graduation from secondary school.

Concern has also been expressed that the current approach to presenting social studies in the curriculum has tended to dilute the separate disciplines of history and geography, each of which previously had a distinct subject matter and time allotment, with an interdisciplinary mixture of studies relating to various social science topics and contemporary problems.

Simply including more history or social science in the curriculum, however, will not of itself ensure adequate political education. The manner of teaching is also important. The current method of teaching civics has been criticized by one authority for stressing the structure and institutions of government while ignoring the dynamics of politics, the role of debate, and the relevance of politics to real life. He has suggested that reliance on the past interpretation of "civics" for the citizenship component of education encouraged a passive view of citizenship, one that should be replaced by a "genuinely political education, if the schools are to produce informed, participating citizens."⁽³⁰⁾

2. Post-Secondary Education

The Commission on Canadian Studies noted in 1975 the lack of attention to Canadian content or context in most areas of teaching and research in Canadian universities and colleges, and its Chairman recently observed that in "the curricula, the teaching programs and the research of our colleges and universities...there still are incredible areas of neglect and imbalance in terms of attention to the Canadian component of the matter under study."⁽³¹⁾ Such neglect has an effect on the training of teachers. If their perspectives are shaped by knowledge more relevant to a country other than Canada, they will be less able to give students an understanding of their own country, its regions and particular problems. The warning sounded a quarter of a century ago is still, to an extent, relevant today: "The ready acceptance

(30) Kenneth Osborne, in Pammett and Pepin (1988), p. 227-228.

(31) Thomas H.B. Symons, Senate Standing Committee, *Proceedings*, 2:60.



of American ideas may be warranted in administration or in the sciences or mathematics, but in the social sciences it can be injurious to our own best interests."⁽³²⁾

If there has been insufficient attention to matters of Canadian content or relevance in higher education, this may also be reflected in the seeming disinterest on the part of most Canadian historians, during recent decades, in the development of school curricula, and also in the fact that university history departments have "attached little or no merit to work with schools."⁽³³⁾

There are other important aspects of higher education relating to citizenship. The emphasis in education today has changed and adapted to the new information society, presenting the student with new options, specializations, and a proliferation of courses. In writing of education needs for the new technological age, an American university president has noted that information is now regarded as society's one crucial resource and has questioned what this portends for citizenship and for the education of citizens. He has warned of the dangers of offering students a multiplicity of courses deemed relevant to modern technological progress at the expense of instruction in the liberal arts, and has explained the need for a new approach to developing curricula. "Educators need to examine existing curricula and develop a strategy for the period ahead. Both the liberal and vocational aspects of our programmes need to evolve continuously as we progress into the information-based technology age..... What is needed is an approach to education that is relevant both to life and to work, in a rapidly changing period in which uncertainty is the main planning factor."⁽³⁴⁾

Another writer has noted that building curricula for the information age has become a major issue in higher education and has warned that some aspects should be retained and developed to link specialized and technical studies with society, its concerns and its values.

(32) Hodgetts (1968), p. 93.

(33) Kenneth Osborne, "'To the Schools We Must Look for Good Canadians': Developments in the Teaching of History in Schools Since 1960," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 3, Fall 1987, p. 123.

(34) Joseph M. Marchello, "Education for a Technological Age," *Futures*, October 1987, p. 558.

He has proposed five essential elements for a new core curriculum, four of which are relevant to citizenship education. These four are:

- Education about the social goals, public purposes, costs, benefits and ethics of citizenship to enable a person to judge the course of his actions.
- A capacity for self-analysis and identity through the study of heritage, religion, philosophy, and literature.
- Some practice in real-world negotiation, in the psychology of consultation and in the nature of leadership in the knowledge environment.
- A global perspective and an attitude of personal responsibility for the general outcome of public life.⁽³⁵⁾

CONTINUING (ADULT) EDUCATION

Citizenship education, therefore, is promoted and carried out in numerous ways through the formal education systems; it is also an inherent part of many education plans for adults who left school early, and for those who are newcomers to Canada. Various programs bring older workers back into the education world; these include, for example, government-sponsored training, adult basic education, and language programs. Continuing education opportunities are offered in educational institutions, through distance education, and by businesses and voluntary organizations.

In 1984 about one in every five adult Canadians was taking part in some form of continuing education and, during the recent economic recession, increasing numbers of discouraged workers enrolled in educational institutions and training courses.⁽³⁶⁾ There are indications that adult education will continue to be prevalent in the years to come, particularly in view of changing labour market requirements expected in the future high technology

(35) Harlan Cleveland, quoted in Marchello (1987), p. 559.

(36) Statistics Canada, *One in Every Five*, Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, Ottawa, 1984, and Ernest B. Akyeampong, "Discouraged Workers - Where Have They Gone?" *Perspectives*, Autumn 1992, p. 38-40.



"information society." The term "lifelong learning" has come into use in recognition of its importance as a strategy for coping with technological, economic, and societal change.

Canada has a long tradition of adult education, encouraged by voluntary associations, such as the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE), and assisted by governments. An important component of adult education, and what has been called its "great tradition," is citizenship education. This includes aspects of "education for immigrants and ethnic groups; education about public affairs; and education for social transformation."⁽³⁷⁾

The National Conference on Adult Education in 1946 recognized this main purpose of adult education: "to awaken people to the possibilities and dangers of modern life, to help them with knowledge and leadership, and to provide channels of communication between different cultural, occupational and social groups so that the solution of human problems may be sought against the broadest background and in the interests of all. In short, the task is the imaginative training for citizenship."⁽³⁸⁾ This primary purpose of adult education was reaffirmed a decade later by a joint committee of the National Conference of Canadian Universities and the CAAE in the following statement:

Because the voice of each Canadian can be freely heard in the affairs of his country, the nature of the political, social and economic entity that is Canada depends upon the judgment and will of all its adults. If their judgment is to be intelligent in the rapidly changing world of the 20th century, they must make use of new knowledge to revise their attitudes and opinions as long as they are alive. There are other good reasons for adult education, ...⁽³⁹⁾ but the demands of citizenship are perhaps the most compelling.

Learning about Canada and its history, geography, and institutions, is an important component of many adult education programs, whether they be official second-language programs for new Canadians or university courses for established ones. Among the

(37) Gordon Selman, *Citizenship and the Adult Education Movement in Canada*, Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1991, p. 21.

(38) J.R. Kidd (1963), p. 109.

(39) *Ibid.*, p. 110.

growing numbers of adults between the ages of 30 and 64 who have participated in university studies during the past decade, for example, most have taken some courses in social sciences, education, and the humanities.⁽⁴⁰⁾

Continuing education is important in terms not only of the advancement of individual and national interests, but of international harmony as well. The need for adult education with a global perspective was eloquently stated at the 1960 World Conference on Adult Education, in its concluding Montreal Declaration:

Survival requires that the countries of the world must learn to live together in peace. "Learn" is the operative word. Mutual respect, understanding, and sympathy are qualities that are destroyed by ignorance, and fostered by knowledge. In the field of international understanding, adult education in today's divided world takes on a new importance.⁽⁴¹⁾

CONTRIBUTION OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

There is a close relationship between voluntary organizations, adult learning and citizenship.⁽⁴²⁾ Among the several organizations working in this area, some in the past made the promotion of good citizenship a specific concern. These included, for example, the Federated Women's Institutes, the Canadian Federation of University Women, the Canadian Citizenship Council, the Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, and the National Council of Women. Numerous other organizations now participate in offering some form of citizenship education.

In particular, voluntary organizations play an important role in providing various kinds of assistance for the settlement of new immigrants. A recent survey has indicated that, although there have been major improvements in government efforts to assist newcomers, the

(40) Cynthia Haggag-Guenette, "Lifelong Learning: Who Goes Back to School?" *Perspectives*, Winter 1991, p. 26-27.

(41) Kidd (1963), p. 411.

(42) See, for example, Selman (1991).

voluntary community still provides a wide range of assistance both directly and indirectly by facilitating access to government services.⁽⁴³⁾

Apart from the special services offered, such as the help and guidance for new Canadians provided by the YW/YMCA and other organizations, the actual participation of individuals in voluntary efforts also provides opportunities for them to learn about public issues and the skills to deal with them in ways appropriate for a democracy. Participation in voluntary activities leads as well to increased understanding of the functioning of society and its institutions, and a greater appreciation of the values that motivate it.

While many organizations provide opportunities for adults to learn more about the meaning of Canadian citizenship and to participate in public life, others promote an understanding of Canadian society and its institutions, and encourage the values of good citizenship, among children and young people. The Rotary Clubs, for example, bring representative senior high school students from all provinces to Ottawa each year, to gain an understanding of Canadian parliamentary institutions and their operation. The Council for Canadian Unity supports the annual Encounters with Canada/ Rencontres du Canada program, to encourage mutual understanding among young people from all parts of this country. One of the main objectives of Scouts Canada and the Girl Guides of Canada is the training of young people to be responsible citizens of their country and the world. These are only a few examples of the many voluntary organizations contributing to citizenship education in Canada.

The Speaker's Commission in the United Kingdom in 1990 recognized the immense value of voluntary citizenship activities and recommended that a comprehensive, nationwide network of information be provided in that country, to direct volunteers to where their skills can best be used. It also urged that public broadcasting participate in this service.⁽⁴⁴⁾

Non-governmental organizations have an important potential for the development of new guidelines and resources for citizenship education, for use in formal learning institutions

(43) Roberta S. Sigel and Marilyn Hoskin, eds., *Education for Democratic Citizenship: A Challenge for Multi-Ethnic Societies*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, Hillsdale, N.J., 1991, p. 190.

(44) United Kingdom, Report of the Speaker's Commission on Citizenship, *Encouraging Citizenship*, HMSO, London, 1990, Recommendation 14, p. xx.

and elsewhere. In the United States, for example, an ambitious project was undertaken in recent years to improve civic education in that country and, in particular, to develop a new civics curriculum for public school classes, from kindergarten through grade twelve.

This program, called CIVITAS (from the Latin word meaning "citizenship, imparting shared responsibility, a common purpose and sense of community") is a joint effort of the Centre for Civic Education in Calabasas, California, and the Council for the Advancement of Citizenship, based in Washington, D.C. The Council, founded by a retired senator, is a consortium of 75 national and regional organizations dedicated to the promotion of responsible citizenship through citizenship education. Funding for the project has been provided by a charitable trust.⁽⁴⁵⁾

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION INITIATIVES IN AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Various western democracies have recognized the importance of education for citizenship, and some reference has already been made to developments in the United Kingdom and the United States. Citizenship education has been a matter of national concern in recent years in these countries and in Australia.

A. Australia

In 1988, the Australian Standing Senate Committee on Employment, Education and Training carried out an inquiry into education for active citizenship in Australian schools and youth organizations. Its report is relevant to the study of citizenship education in Canada because of the similarities between the two countries.

The Committee's report described as desirable an active kind of citizenship, one not depending merely on a knowledge of politics, but encompassing as well the motivation and capacity to make good use of that knowledge. "Active citizenship is a compound of knowledge,

(45) John H. Buchanan, Jr., "CIVITAS: Civic Education to Inform and Involve," *National Civic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 4, July 1989, p. 279-280.

skills and attitudes: knowledge about how society works; the skills needed to participate effectively; and a conviction that active participation is the right of all citizens." The Committee warned that any democracy "neglects these matters at its peril."⁽⁴⁶⁾

It noted indications within the population of ignorance and apathy toward the nation's political and government systems, and recommended that measures be taken to encourage people to recognize the significance of the system in place, with its provision for their democratic right to vote.

Specifically, the Committee recommended the initiation of a national program in education for active citizenship directed at the whole community, the designation of education for active citizenship as a priority for improvements in schooling, and the encouragement by the national government of the adoption of this priority by school authorities.

The Committee urged that social studies receive greater attention in the schools, beginning at the primary level, and that opportunities for citizenship education be exploited in all existing courses throughout the school systems. It noted, as well, that teacher education is "a key factor in bringing about major improvements in education for active citizenship in schools," and recommended that the national government "ask all higher education institutions with responsibility for teacher education to ensure that education faculties recognise the importance of education for active citizenship and make provision for it as a component in pre-service courses, particularly for those teacher education students who are likely to teach in social studies and related areas of the curriculum." It also urged the national government to develop adequate resources to facilitate citizenship teaching.⁽⁴⁷⁾

B. The United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the 1990 Report of the Speaker's Commission on Citizenship, entitled *Encouraging Citizenship*, recommended that the study of citizenship should be "a part of the education of every pupil from the early years right through to further and

(46) Australia, Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training (1989), p. 7.

(47) *Ibid.*, p. 47, 48-49 and 62.

higher education," and that every school governing body should request the development of a strategy to incorporate citizenship studies across the curriculum, and should consider a progress report regularly.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The Commission was concerned that teaching citizenship should be done effectively. It should not be presented either as theory without practice, as in civics courses, or as merely an experience, "practice without theory"; both elements were necessary for a balanced and effective course in citizenship. The objective was for young people to be able to leave school "with some confidence in their ability to participate in their society, to resolve conflict and, if they oppose a course of action, to express that opposition fairly, effectively and peacefully."⁽⁴⁹⁾ The Commission contributed recommendations to the National Curriculum Council in the course of the Council's preparation of a guidance document on citizenship as a cross-cultural theme.

Apparently responding to a popular anxiety that the schools were not producing "good citizens," the Secretary of State for Education, speaking before a conference organized for the Speaker's Commission in 1990, stated that home and school should share the responsibility of preparing young people for citizenship in the future. He asserted that schools should be responsible for teaching three "fundamental aspects of citizenship," which he identified as "the individual's rights and responsibilities, within a democratic society... the organisations and structures of society, including the rules and laws within which it functions, ... (and) the role of the individual."⁽⁵⁰⁾

CONCLUSION

This paper has outlined some of the major aspects of citizenship education. This multi-faceted topic may be viewed as one main current, joined and strengthened by the

(48) *Encouraging Citizenship* (1990), p. xviii.

(49) Derek Heater, "Citizenship: A Remarkable Case of Sudden Interest," *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. 2, April 1991, p. 163-164.

(50) Heater (1991), p. 149.

contributions of many different tributaries, all directed toward the achievement of common understanding among individuals and nations, and the better functioning of democratic society. At different levels and through various media, citizenship education enhances the development of children, young people, immigrants, and all Canadians.

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